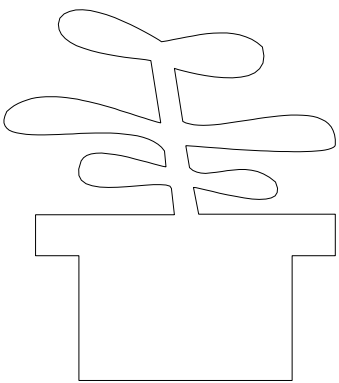


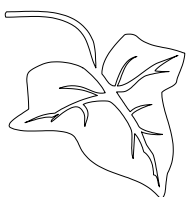


Evaluating and Treating Landscape Trees Following a Hurricane



The damage to trees other than palms (pines and broadleaf trees) can be difficult to evaluate. Easily detectable damage includes defoliation, broken branches, split trunks and leaning trees. Defoliated trees that were healthy before the storm often leaf out quickly after a hurricane; if this is the only damage, no special treatment is required. There is no need to apply fertilizer or other chemicals. Time is the best treatment for this type of damage.

Broken branches should be pruned back to an existing, intact, undamaged branch. This technique, called drop crotching, is less damaging to the tree than topping. Pruning paint is not needed and will not help the tree. If there is a crack or split evident where a major limb meets the trunk and the crack goes into the trunk, it is best to remove the limb. If the branch is very large and the crack extends well into the trunk, consider removing the tree. Limbs with this type of damage are not well-secured to the tree and will not heal. The limb could easily fall from the tree in a storm.



If small-sized trees are leaning, they can be righted and staked as you would stake a transplanted tree. Treat this tree as if it were transplanted, watering it frequently. If the tree is not too large and the area receives adequate rainfall in the next several months, the tree has a good chance of recovering.

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Less obvious damage includes cracks or splits in the trunk or major limbs and breakage of the root system. Trees with cracks in the trunk and branches are very dangerous, and serious thought should be given to removing the tree. These cracks will not heal and will remain for the life of the tree. If there is any question as to the safety and health of a tree that is close to a building, school yard, park, parking lot or other place where people live, work or play, consult a professional arborist. They are the only people qualified to evaluate the severity of this type of damage.